(c) the steps being taken to bring in regional uniformity in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There is disparity in rates of minimum wages in various regions of the country, which is due to differences in socio-economic and agro-climatic conditions, prices of essential commodities, paying capacity, productivity and local conditions influencing the wage rate. The regional disparity in minimum wages is also attributed to the fact that both the Central and State Governments are the appropriate Government to fix, revise and enforce minimum wages in scheduled employments in their respective jurisdictions under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948.

(c) In order to minimize the disparity in minimum wages in various regions of the country, the Central Government has issued guidelines for setting up Regional Minimum Wages Advisory Committees. In order to bring in uniformity in minimum wages, the Central Government mooted the concept of a national floor level minimum wage and fixed it at Rs. 35/- per day in1996 based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Rural Labour (1991) and subsequent rise in the price level. The national floor level wage is periodically revised based on the basis of increase in the Consumer Price Index. It was last revised to Rs. 50/- per day w.e.f. 1.9.2002. The States/UTs have been requested from time to time to ensure that the minimum wage in none of their scheduled employments is below the national floor level wage.

Draft Hardware Policy

*348. DR. M. N. DAS :

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the industry, including the apex body for IT manufacturers represented by the MAIT has called upon Government to announce the hardware policy at the earliest;

(b) if so, whether the representative body of manufacturing companies of information technology has, recently, circulated a draft paper on national electronics/IT hardware manufacturing policy; if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have examined the draft hardware policy circulated by the representative body;

(d) if so, to what extent it has been agreed upon; and

(e) by when, a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) There have been demands by the Electronics/IT hardware manufacturers for a comprehensive National Policy on Electronic/IT hardware manufacturing.

(b) Department of Information Technology (DIT) has circulated a Draft Paper on "National Electronics/IT Hardware Manufacturing Policy" to all the apex associations, including MAIT, representing Electronics/ IT hardware manufacturers in the country. The details are given in the Statement enclosed (*See* below).

(c) and (d) A broad based in teraction with the industry has taken place.

(e) No date has been fixed in this regard.

Statement

The Vision, Objectives and Strategy for supporting Electronics/IT hardware manufacturing as outlined in the Draft Paper on National Electronics/IT Hardware Manufacturing Policy are as follows :—

Vision

To make India one of the key players in the global electronics/IT Hardware — manufacturing sector and integrate with the global value-added-chain.

Objectives

Growth of Electronics/IT Hardware industry in India has not been consistent with the market potential. The objectives of the strategy in supporting/encouraging hardware manufacturing would thus be as follows :—

(a) Spurring the Domestic demand ;

(b) Making Indian Electronics/IT Hardware Sector globally competitive ;

(c) Facilitating the industry for addressing global markets ;

(d) Facilitate formation of catalysts for growth of the industry ;

(e) Positioning India in the global value-added-chain ;

(f) Focus on value-added products ;

(g) Reducing dependence on imports ;

(h) Help businesses realise full potential in creating wealth.

Strategy for Supporting Electronics/IT Hardware Manufacturing

The strategy for supporting/encouraging manufacture of hardware in India is aimed at providing a fertile business ambience in which the investments would flourish and making the industry globally competitive. The measures proposed in this direction and to achieve the objectives are as follows :—

Tariff Policy

Reduction of customs duty to zero% on all the raw materials and inputs, capital goods, abolition of SAD, sales tax @ 4%, excise duty @8% etc.

Exim Policy

- Unification of investments for manufacturing for domestic and export markets ;
- Self declaration.

Hardware Manufacturing Cluster Parks (HMCP)

Area exclusively for Hardware industry promoted with the help of State Government and private sector investments, tax benefits, self declaration, flexi labour laws & international level of infrastructure.

Other Measures

- All State/Central purchases to be of locally manufactured products ;
- Upgradation of general infrastructure ;
- Reduction in Transaction Time ;
- Supporting R&D ;
- Marketing "Made in India" ;
- Development of Semiconductor Industry.

- Inviting large EMS companies to invest in India
- Relocation of manufacturing plants to India
- HRD in VLSI design/Embedded Software
- Flexi labour laws
- Patenting
- Quality Certification
- Rate of Depreciation
- Soft bonding

Monitoring of schemes

*349. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRI VAYALAR RAVI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have cleared the priority agenda, the list of thrust areas for 2003-04 relating to schemes, objectives as well as policy issues;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that out of the list of 47 priority/thrust areas related to schemes and objectives, seven schemes would be monitored by him while 40 items relating to objectives would be monitored by the Committee of Secretaries;

(c) if so, what is the total amount likely to be spent on these schemes; and

(d) by what time the work on these projects is likely to start?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The list of seven Projects/Schemes to be monitored by the Prime Minister and the list of 40 Projects/Schemes to be monitored by the Committee of Secretaries are placed at Statements-I and II respectively (*See* below). Estimation of the likely expenditure on these